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TO: IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR.

REF: DIRECTOR

1. IN THE JUDGMENT OF VIETNAM STATION THE SNIE DOES NOT REPEAT NOT RECOGNIZE SUFFICIENTLY THE DESPERATENESS OF THE GVN'S MILITARY AND MORALE POSITION. THE GOVERNMENT'S "SUBSTANTIAL EDGE" IN FORCES IN GVN MR 3 AND 4 IS ILLUSORY AND IS OFFSET BY A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING THE AVAILABILITY OF "SURPLUS" DIVISIONS IN MILITARY REGIONS ONE AND TWO AND HANOI'S ABILITY TO REINFORCE AND RESUPPLY THE COCHIN CHINA BATTLEFIELD IN A VERY SHORT TIME. UNLESS THE U.S. TAKES PROMPT ACTION TO HALT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION NOT NECESSARILY THROUGH MILITARY MEANS, THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE COUNTRY IS LIKELY TO UNRAVEL QUICKLY OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, RESULTING IN THE ACTUAL OR EFFECTIVE MILITARY DEFEAT OF THE GVN IN A VERY SHORT TIME.

2. FOLLOWING GVN LOSSES IN MR 1 AND 2, THE OVERALL "BALANCE OF FORCES" HAS SHIFTED DECISIVELY IN HANOI'S FAVOR. AGAINST A

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MINIMUM OF 17 NVA INFANTRY DIVISIONS ALREADY IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THE GVN HAS NO MORE THAN 10 AT THE MOST. IN TERMS OF REGIMENTAL EQUIVALENTS, INCLUDING EVERYTHING FROM INFANTRY, ARMOR AND ARTILLERY UNITS TO MOBILE TERRITORIAL FORCES, THE GVN CLEARLY IS OUTMATCHED, WITH ONLY ABOUT 57 REGIMENTS OR THEIR EQUIVALENTS AS AGAINST NEARLY 100 FOR THE COMMUNISTS (DAO FIGURES). FURTHERMORE, THE ELIMINATION OF GVN COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS IN MILITARY REGIONS 1 AND 2, INCLUDING THE TREMENDOUS LOSS OF AIRCRAFT, ARMOR AND ARTILLERY, HAS GREATLY REDUCED THE FIREPOWER WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND AGAINST WHICH THE ENEMY FORCES HAD TO GUARD, WHEREAS HANOI'S FORCES, ALTHOUGH UNDOUBTEDLY TAKING SOME LOSSES, HAVE EMERGED WITH MOST OF THEIR UNITS STILL COMBAT EFFECTIVE AND CAPABLE OF ABSORBING THE CONTINUING FLOW OF RESERVES.

3. ALTHOUGH TOTAL GVN MILITARY PERSONNEL IN MR 3 AND 4, INCLUDING PSDF, POLICE AND REGULAR FORCES, OUTNUMBER THE NVA/VC, THE RELIABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TERRITORIAL UNITS AGAINST NVA INFANTRY IS QUESTIONABLE. BY CONTRAST ALMOST ALL OF THE 200,000 NVA/VC IN MR 3 AND 4 FALL INTO THE "MAIN FORCE" CATEGORY WITH MORALE AND LEADERSHIP BUOYED BY RECENT SUCCESSES. MOREOVER, GOVERNMENT FORCES ARE NOW SO DEPLOYED IN MR 3 AND 4

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THAT THERE IS ONLY A DIVISIONAL EQUIVALENT IN RESERVE, WHILE NONE OF THE NVA/VC UNITS CAN BE CONSIDERED COMPARABLY IMMOBILIZED IN A DEFENSIVE CAPACITY.

4, AS AN ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE NOW HAVE THE OPTION OF DIVERTING LARGE NUMBERS OF REINFORCEMENTS SOUTHWARD FROM MR 1 AND 2 WHERE THEIR COMBAT AND REQUIRMENTS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED. THIS WOULD ENABLE THEM TO CONTINUE WAGING THE WAR INDEFINITELY IN MR 3 AND 4 WITHOUT HAVING TO DRAW HEAVILY ON THEIR RESERVES AT HOME--WHICH OF COURSE V COULD BE UTILIZED IF THEIR LOSSES IN THE SOUTH SHOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE. THE GVN THUS FACES A "NEW" ENEMY WHICH CAN COUNTERBALANCE THROUGH INFILTRATION AND TROOP REDEPLOYMENTS ANY RESERVES WHICH IT MIGHT GENERATE. IN ADDITION, GVN EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS REQUIREMENTS FAR EXCEED THE DOLLAR CEILINGS IMPOSED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS.

5, IN OUR OPINION, NEITHER THE WEATHER NOR LOGISTICS CONSIDERATIONS WILL POSE SIGNIFICANT OBSTACLES FOR THE NVA IN THE CURRENT STRATEGIC CONTEXT, NVA GAINS IN MR 1 AND 2 IN FACT HAVE SHORTENED COMMUNIST LOGISTICS LINES BY RELEASING LARGE AMOUNTS OF EQUIPMENT AND ARMOR IN THESE AREAS FOR IMMEDIATE USE ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY. MOREOVER, EVEN DURING THE MONSOON SEASON,

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THE NVA SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONTINUE RAPIDLY REBUILDING AND EXPANDING  
THEIR FORCES IN GVN MRHWHERE THE RAINS ARE LESS DISRUPTIVE AND  
WHERE A REASONABLY GOOD ROAD SYSTEM CAN SUSTAIN TROOP MOVEMENTS  
EVEN DURING WET WEATHER.

6. ON BALANCE, SIMPLE ARITHMETIC SUGGESTS THAT THE ODDS ARE  
STRONGLY AGAINST THE GVN'S CONTINUED MILITARY VIABILITY, EVEN FOR  
A SHORT TIME. HANOI'S FAILURE TO REALIZE ITS OWN RELATIVE STRENGTH  
AT THE MOMENT COULD SERVE TO DELAY AN IMMEDIATE MILITARY DEFEAT OF  
THE GVN BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF DECISIVE U.S. ACTION TO HALT THE NVA  
OFFENSIVE, THE GVN'S SURVIVAL IN ITS PRESENT FORM WILL DEPEND  
TO A VERY LARGE EXTENT ON THE TIMING OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.  
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